

**St Ignatios of Antioch
Melkite Greek Catholic Church
1003 Merry Street
Augusta, Georgia 30904
706 364-6219**



**13th Sunday after Pentecost
27 August 2023**

13th Sunday after Pentecost



Teaching through Parables

IN THE TRADITIONAL CULTURES of the Middle East language is the prime conveyor of beauty and truth. The elegance with which a thought is phrased – often too florid for our contemporary tastes – strikes even those who disagree with the idea expressed. Truth in such cultures is not bolstered by footnotes but by images that captivate the mind and make the hearer think more deeply about what was said. In the story of the rich young man we saw the Lord Jesus use hyperbole to underline his point. He also used parables, as in that of the landlord and the vinedressers (Matthew 21:33-42), placed in Matthew's Gospel a few days before the Passion.

A parable is a story with a moral rather than a straightforward statement. It is often an extended metaphor, based, as is this parable, on comparison. The story has merit on its own level and may stand out in the hearer's mind more than the reason why the story is being told. But the parable also has a deeper level, one which may not be evident to the casual hearer but provide much food for thought for those who are seeking God. It is in this sense that parables have been described as veiled statements of truth.

The Landowner and His Tenants

The story in this parable is straightforward enough. The landowner fixed one of his properties for commercial purposes and rented it to vinedressers. The tenants not only did not pay the rent, they attacked the landlord's agents and, finally, even his son. The Lord left it to the hearers to complete the story, asking "*When the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those vinedressers?*" (Matthew 13:40). Their response was right on cue and correct – cheat the landlord and you will be punished. But that wasn't the reason why the Gospel records this story. We read that in the following verses:

First of all, Jesus quotes Psalm 117:22,23(LXX): "*Have you never read in the Scriptures, 'The stone, which the builders rejected, has become the chief cornerstone – This was the Lord's doing and it is marvelous in our eyes'?*"

Then the Lord removes the veil, as it were. He interprets both the parable and the psalm in terms of the Kingdom of God and of His own role in it. He was the chief cornerstone and those who accepted Him as such

would replace the leaders of Israel at the head of God's people. Matthew concludes with this statement, "*When the chief priests heard His parables, they perceived that He was speaking of them. But when they sought to lay hands on Him, they feared the multitudes, because they took Him for a prophet.*" (Matthew 21:45-46).

Why Parables?

Earlier in His ministry, when Jesus told the parable of the sower and his seed, His disciples asked Him, "*Why do you speak to them in parables?*" (Matthew 13:10) His response shows that parables in the earlier stages of His ministry were meant to draw those who were truly ready to hear the Gospel. And He quoted a passage from the beginning of Isaiah's ministry in the mid-8th century BC. The Lord told Isaiah that his call for people to repent would be heard but not understood "*for this people's heart has grown dull (or fat)*" (Isaiah 6:9,10). Not everyone would be open to him or interested in what he had to say.

Jesus said that this text of Isaiah was fulfilled in His preaching to these people. Some people rejected the Messenger ("*Can anything good come out of Nazareth?*") Others simply would not be interested in anything of God. Jesus' parables were more likely to arouse interest in people who would be better disposed to hear godly teaching and would be open to Christ and His message.

In contrast to the dull hearers of Isaiah's day, the apostles had shown themselves ready to hear the Gospel as the Lord preached it. "*Blessed are your eyes for they see and your ears for they hear*" (v.16), He said to them. You see with the eyes of your heart, and hear with the ears of your soul. This openness would not be enough to keep Judas for betraying Him, but it was sufficient to keep others close to Him until they could experience the resurrection.

In the Gospel of Luke we read how the risen Christ opened the understanding of His joyful followers, so that they might comprehend the Scriptures – "*the Law of Moses, and the Prophets and the Psalms*" concerning His mission on earth – "*things that you have witnessed*" (see Luke 24:44-47). The disciples' experience of the death and resurrection of Christ made them able to understand what He had said to them before those events. Now they could appreciate the fullest meaning of His parables because their experience proved to them that He was indeed the chief cornerstone of God's new temple.

Milk and Solid Food

In a similar way the apostles realized that there were two levels of understanding in the first Christians as well. St Paul tells the Corinthians, "*I could not speak to you as to spiritual people but as to carnal, as to babes in Christ. I fed you with milk and not with solid food, for until now you were not able to receive it*" (1 Corinthians 3:1,2). They could comprehend the more fundamental teachings but would not be able to grasp the deeper aspects of the Gospel message.

In the Epistle to the Hebrews, we are given a clearer understanding of what these "levels" of Christian faith and life may be. In chapter 6 we read, "*Leaving the discussion of the elementary principles of Christ, let us go on to perfection, not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God, of the doctrine of baptisms, of laying-on of hands, of resurrection of the dead and of eternal judgment*" (Hebrews 6:1,2). This list roughly parallels our mysteries of Christian initiation: reception of catechumens, profession of faith, baptism and chrismation. The Epistle goes on to describe the sacrifice of Christ in terms of the temple rite of atonement, which would be re-imaged in our Divine Liturgy, the subject of the early Church's post-baptismal catechesis, which they called the *mystagogia*. The Eucharist, they insisted, could not be shared, much less understood, without first experiencing the "elementary principles" of Christian life. Unless we are committed to repentance and a living faith, unless we have been united to the death and resurrection of Christ in baptism, we cannot fully appreciate the Eucharist. We might attend the Liturgy, but we would sooner or later get bored with

it and stop coming or take part only for social reasons. We would “hear, but not understand.” We would “see, but not perceive.”

The Lord knows better than anyone that all do not have the same spiritual capacity or insight. We would do well to pray for increased understanding of the milk of the Christian life so that we will find the joy in the solid food of the Eucharist that we are meant to enjoy.

Sunday Collections

Attendance	Date	Collection
31	2 July 2023	\$429.00
38	9 July 2023	1,547.00
34	16 July 2023	1,365.00
44	23 July 2023	540.00
22	30 July 2023	0.00
55	6 August 2023	1,550.51
32	13 August 2023	133.81
37	20 August 2023	146.22

Divine Liturgy Intentions:

For the Living:

Bishop Francois, Fr. John Azar, Fr. James Graham, David Mangelsdorf, Brian Frank, , Nookid Graham, Ali de la Vega, Dn. Kent & Diana Plowman, Mandie, Nick Baiad, Charlie & Kathleen Barnette, Richie Damici, Medical Personnel and First Responders

For the Dead:

Mary Ellen King, Mary Toyce

Announcements

We are live-streaming on our Facebook page at the following days & times:

Monday, Wednesday, Friday – 8:00AM, The Third Hour

Friday – 6:00 PM Weekday Vespers

Saturday – 6:00PM Great Vespers

Sunday – 9:00AM Orthros & 10:00AM Divine Liturgy

WE'VE BEGUN PRAYING the 3rd Hour on Monday, Wednesday and Friday at 8am. This is a short prayer service from our version of the Liturgy of the Hours. It lasts less than 20 minutes or so. Come join us!

PRAYER OPPORTUNITIES AROUND TOWN – Most Holy Trinity parish will be hosting a Men's Holy Hour every Friday morning from 6-7am. There will also be a coffee hour and reflection time afterwards – Men from all parishes are invited to attend for whatever portion of the time they are available. For the Ladies – St. Joseph's will be hosting a Women's Holy Hour on the first Monday of each month at 7pm.

AMERICAN HERITAGE GIRLS, Troop 1917, is starting its 12th year! Our Christ-centered, very active troop based at St. Teresa of Avila, 4921 Columbia Road, Grovetown, has opening for every level, ages 5 – 18.

AHG'S mission statement is "Building women of integrity through service to God, family, community, and country". And our motto is "Faith, Service, Fun" and the girls grow closer to Christ through religious awards programs and devotionals. Service is integral to AHG, and our troop provides more than six community service opportunities each year. Girls love AHG because they make great friends and participate in exciting and challenging activities including camping and other outdoor adventures.

If you and your daughter(s) would like to see what we're all about, please email our registrar, Noelia, at jfniperez@gmail.com, for more information. We are holding our kickoff party on August 24th and Parents University on August 31st, so email her soon to check out our amazing troop!

THE KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS SOCCER CHALLENGE will be held on September 9th at 2607 Lumpkin Rd., Augusta at 9am. Boys and Girls aged 9 – 14 are invited to participate. For details contact Kevin at KevinRNewhall@gmail.com

Upcoming Calendar

Feast of the Nativity of Mary – Sept. 8th

Great Vespers – Thursday, September 7th at 7pm

Divine Liturgy – Friday, September 8th at 7pm

Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross – Sept. 14

Resurrectional Troparion

(Tone 4)



The wo - men di - sci - ples of the Lord, ha - ving



learned from the an - gel the joy - ful an -



- nounce - ment of the re - sur - rec - tion, and ha - ving re -



- jec - ted the an - ces - tral sen - tence proud - ly told the A -



- pos - tles: Death is de - spoil - ed Christ God is ri -



- sen, be - stow - ing to the world great mer - cy.

Kondakion of the Nativity of Mary

(Tone 4)



Through your ho-ly birth, O Im - ma - cu - late One, Jo-a-



- chim and Ann were de - li - vered from the shame of



child - less - ness, and A - dam and Eve from the cor - rup - tion



of death. Your peo - ple re - deemed from the debt of



their sins ce - le - brate your birth cry - ing out



to you: the bar - ren one gives birth to the Mo - ther of



God, the Sus - tai - ner of our life.

Prokimenon

Reader: How great are your works, O Lord! In wisdom you have wrought them all.

All: How great are your works, O Lord! In wisdom you have wrought them all.

Reader: Bless the Lord, O my soul! You are very great indeed, O Lord my God!

All: How great are your works, O Lord! In wisdom you have wrought them all.

Reader: How great are your works, O Lord!

All: In wisdom you have wrought them all.

Readings for the Week:

Monday:	2 nd Cor 12:10-19	Mark 4:10-24
Tuesday:	2 nd Cor 12:20-13:2	Mark 4:24-34
Wednesday:	2 nd Cor 13:3-13	Mark 4:35-40
Thursday:	Gal 1:1-3, 20-2:5	Mark 5:1-20
Friday:	Gal 2:6-10	Mark 5:22-24, 35-6:1
Saturday:	1 st Cor 4:1-6	Matt 23:1-12

Saints of the Week:

Aug. 27: Holy Father Poemen; and of the Holy Martyr Phanurios the newly-revealed
Aug. 28: Holy Father Moses the Ethiopian, and of Augustine, Bishop of Hippo
Aug. 29: Feast of the Beheading of the Prophet and Forerunner John the Baptist
Aug. 30: Holy Fathers Alexander, John and Paul the Latter, Archbishops of Constantinople
Aug. 31: Deposition of the Cincture of the Theotokos in Chalcopratia; Holy Hieromartyr Cyprian of Carthage
Sept. 1: Beginning of the New Church Year; Simeon the Stylite; Synaxis of the Mother of God; the martyr Aeithalas, the 40 women martyred with Ammon the Deacon; the martyred brothers Callistus, Evod and Hermogenes; and the Just Joshua son of Nun
Sept. 2: Holy Martyr Mammias; John the Faster, Archbishop of Constantinople
Sept. 3: Hieromartyr Anthimus; Holy Father Theoctistus

Word Search

G	S	M	Y	G	I	N	H	E	R	I	T	A	N	C	E	U	X
T	S	T	O	N	E	D	P	M	K	M	G	X	T	S	W	K	S
P	U	B	B	O	V	X	A	L	S	R	L	R	T	I	U	R	F
F	Q	U	T	W	E	Q	O	B	T	C	E	P	S	E	R	R	O
H	J	I	G	O	L	P	S	E	R	V	A	N	T	S	U	P	Z
E	L	L	W	N	B	R	O	A	E	F	W	E	V	Y	Q	N	G
D	Q	D	D	D	A	E	B	O	S	A	T	I	J	J	A	E	C
G	S	E	E	E	R	D	R	O	N	L	N	P	U	M	A	P	B
E	E	R	L	R	A	N	N	U	I	E	O	X	X	K	L	A	F
X	Y	S	L	F	P	E	H	V	Y	F	W	R	N	G	N	P	Z
A	E	U	I	U	L	R	E	A	R	I	B	E	W	S	W	R	X
J	B	L	K	L	M	M	R	W	W	S	E	N	C	X	U	E	V
T	Q	R	I	D	F	D	H	I	C	L	A	W	N	C	J	J	A
Q	R	Y	O	R	T	S	E	D	E	P	T	O	B	L	T	E	T
J	K	Z	L	A	W	D	O	A	E	H	S	D	N	M	J	C	Z
R	E	W	O	T	D	B	S	L	A	A	J	N	K	A	H	T	R
K	P	D	W	R	C	E	R	I	E	Q	J	A	E	X	Y	E	Z
G	N	X	T	U	D	I	V	S	F	I	U	L	U	X	L	D	M

Abroad

Beat

Builders

Destroy

Evil

Eyes

Fruit

Hedge

Heir

Inheritance

Killed

Landowner

Leased

Man

Parable

Rejected

Render

Respect

Season

Servants

Son

Stoned

Tower

Vat

Vineyard

Wonderful

Parish Information:

Rt. Rev. Michael Skrocki, JCD
Pastor

abounamike@aol.com

Knights of Columbus
JFK Council

1st Wednesday of the month, 7pm
Most Holy Trinity

4th Degree Assembly
2nd Wednesday of the month, 7pm
St. Ignatios

Publicans Prayer Group
Postponed until Further Notice

New Parishioners:
Please register with Fr. Michael.

Mystery of Holy Confession
Please contact Fr. Michael to set up a convenient time.

Mystery of Christian Initiation
Expectant parents should notify Fr. Michael prior to the birth of the child. Adult converts should contact Fr. Michael so arrangements may be made for any necessary instruction and sacraments.

Mystery of Holy Crowning
Those planning to marry should notify the Fr. Michael
at least six months prior to the desired Wedding date.

Mystery of Holy Anointing
Please notify Fr. Michael when you or a family member is in need of anointing.

To report sexual abuse by clergy, parish personnel or volunteers of the Eparchy of Newton, please call the **Victim Assistance Coordinator** at 1-800-479-5910.